

# Church Magazine



DECEMBER 2020



STEYNING  
AND ASHURST

ISSUED FREE

# Steyning Parish Church,

1 Vicarage Lane, Steyning BN44 3YL

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*At the time of going to press we await confirmation from the government that current coronavirus restrictions will end on 2 December. If this is the case, Sunday services will resume at both churches on the Second Sunday in Advent, 6 December. The midweek Eucharist at St Andrew's & St Cuthman's is likely to recommence on 9 December.*

*See page 4 for details of planned Christmas services. Again, subject to the lifting of restrictions, please support our Organ Concerts on 5 and 6 December and let your friends know about the Voice of Christmas Concerts to be held on 21 December. See pages ... and 14 for details*

*Fr Mark, Vicar of Steyning and Rector of Ashurst*

## Parish Office Address:

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[www.steyningparishchurch.org](http://www.steyningparishchurch.org)

**THE OFFICE REMAINS CLOSED BUT IS STAFFED REMOTELY**

Post is being picked up and the telephone diverted to the

Parish Administrator: Pat McMullan.

## FR STEPHEN WRITES

Greetings brothers and sisters in this wonderful season of Advent.

This Advent I find myself full of seasonal joy, but also a little sad as this will be my last Christmas here in Steyning. As I come to the end of my curacy I can reflect on how much I have learned as a priest. I find it hard not to be moved by the love, kindness and patience you have shown both David and I, and we both consider you all part of our family in Christ. You will all remain in our thoughts and prayers as we move on to the next exciting chapter of our lives.



Advent, in many ways is similar to other religious festivals such as Hanukkah and Diwali. Although Judaism and Hinduism are religions that are profoundly different to Christianity, one thing that their festivals have in common is a celebration of light existing in darkness. They all celebrate the fact that light will always overcome darkness. For Christians, Advent marks the beginning of a season where we look forward to the coming of an ultimate light and hope for all the world; a hope that will emerge in the event of the birth of a child born in Bethlehem; a child named Jesus. An event known as the Incarnation, a gift to humankind, when God became man.

Advent affords us a time of self-reflection and preparation, so that we can receive afresh that light and hope in our lives; a hope that enables us to shine as individual lights in a dark world. We do this through acts of love and kindness to our families, friends and neighbours. It is through such acts that the darkness in people's lives is overcome and dispelled.

For many people this year has been very difficult and in one way or another we have all been affected by Covid-19. I experienced times when I felt helpless and my mental health was stretched to its limits. This time in our history could best be described as a time of darkness, but as mentioned previously darkness will always be overcome by light. At the time of writing it would appear that such light in this global situation has arrived in the form of a vaccine. For many people across the world this news could not have arrived soon enough as it will mark the beginning of a return to normality. For us as a church it means that we will soon be able to return to our communities. We will again be able to share in the Eucharist, our churches will again be filled with song, and for me personally I look forward to being able to share the peace once more. In this vaccine a shaft of light has shone through the dark and gloomy clouds of Covid-19.

This advent let us join with our millions of our brothers and sisters globally to use this season of Advent to prepare ourselves to meet hope and light, in the form of a child born of a virgin. Explore again the mystery of the incarnation and let it transform your lives once more afresh. May this season be to you a time of hope, joy and a time to move forward. May you and your families find peace this Advent and be blessed in all you do.

*Fr Stephen Mills Mth*

## FROM THE EDITOR:

Welcome to this December edition of the Church magazine. It was just a year ago, last December, that I edited the first colour magazine, and I wish now to say a HUGE thank you to Fr Stephen and to Bill Thomson for all their tuition to make it possible. Doing this each month I learn something new about putting a magazine together and getting it printed. Last year the magazine contained a few articles, but was mainly advertising What's On within our churches and the community. Now, sadly, there is little to say about what is going on from groups, and so I have tried to involve all of you in putting together a magazine that reflects the worship in the Church, your thoughts and loves and a bit of fun.

I am absolutely serious when I ask for your articles/thoughts/photos. There are many who read this magazine who cannot go out and they appreciate your stimulation.

Send to: [steyningchurchmag@gmail.com](mailto:steyningchurchmag@gmail.com)

Thank you to all who have helped me this year, and I wish you all a peaceful and hope - filled December.

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

### Ashurst

Christmas Day Eucharist 10:30am at St James's

### Steyning

Midnight Mass 11pm on Christmas Eve

Eucharist of Christmas Morning 9:30am on Christmas Day

Because we will not be able to accommodate the usual large numbers for our popular Crib Service, this year's event will take the form of a specially recorded video currently in production. To be made available on the church website and YouTube channel.

*The Vicar and Churchwardens wish you  
a peaceful and blessed Christmas*

**MAGAZINE DEADLINE for  
JANUARY 2021**

**FRIDAY 4 DECEMBER 2020**

*Email address: [steyningchurchmag@gmail.com](mailto:steyningchurchmag@gmail.com)*

## PARISH REGISTERS

### FUNERAL

Karen McCarthy Thursday 5 November

Rest eternal grant unto her O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon her.

Our love and prayers for all her family during this time.

### PAUSE AND PRAY

God of power, you are strong to save and you never fail those who trust in you; keep us under your protection and spread abroad your reign of peace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sovereign God, enthroned in the heavens, look upon us with your eyes of mercy, as we look on you with humility and love, and fill our souls with your peace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, you have given us your only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*Christmas Day Collect*

## "VOICE OF CHRISTMAS" BY THE AGNES COLLECTIVE

A live concert of words, carols and Christmas music

**Monday, 21 December**

**THREE PERFORMANCES**

**3pm, 5pm and 7:30pm**

Tickets £13 adults & £6 children, under 4's free

Tickets will be available from 5 December



The Agnes Collective

Contact for more details: 07973 469113

Or [alexandra.gibson@me.com](mailto:alexandra.gibson@me.com)

If you would like to receive the church weekly bulletin, please contact the Church Office at: [office@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:office@steyningparishchurch.org) or to ring 01903 813276.

## FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS EMERITI

I cannot believe that it is nine years since I became churchwarden and it was a lovely surprise when Fr. Mark presented me with the lovely set of pens which were so beautifully engraved to mark my retirement as churchwarden. I would like to thank you for this lovely gift and Felicity joins me in thanking you for the delicious wine and wonderful flowers.

Although officially retired, I will still be around to help if necessary. I would also like to wish Bill and Sarah my very best wishes in their new undertaking.

I really could not have carried out my duties without the generous help of so many people each with their individual talents, it really was amazing. I should also like to thank Denise for her support over the four years she was warden with me.

Thank you once again for your gift, kind words and generous help over the years.

*John Downe*

My time as one of the Churchwardens has been an enjoyable privilege during an interregnum, and serving Fr Mark alongside John Downe.

I thank all the church community for their support and understanding during these years, and recently these past eighteen months because of my cancer I have not been able to give my all.

I thank you also for your generous gifts as we stood down. Lovely to have a lasting memory.

My prayers are with Sarah and Bill as they take on their new roles as Churchwardens, and to those whom the PCC appoint as Deputy Wardens to make an important, good team.

I continue to be in the church community with my pastoral work, the catering team and as a server.

With prayers, love and thanks

*Denise Bedford*

We thank John and Denise for their leadership, dedication, hard work and commitment in the time they have served as churchwardens. In honour of all they have done, and in consultation with the Parochial Church Council, the Vicar has conferred on them the title 'Churchwardens Emeriti'.

We congratulate Sarah Lavery and Bill Thomson on their election as new churchwardens for Steyning. Judie Thomson joins Wendy Francis as our new deputy warden and becomes part of the team.

## PRAYING FOR YOU

The weekly Sunday bulletin sent from the Parish Office gives all the information about what is happening with services, local support etc, and how to access these. There is also the list of those needing our prayers. Any new prayer requests should be sent to:

[office@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:office@steyningparishchurch.org)

## PRAYER DIARY FOR DECEMBER

### **Monday 21 St Thomas, Apostle**

Almighty and ever living God, who didst strengthen thine apostle Thomas with sure and certain faith in thy Son's resurrection: Grant us so perfectly and without doubt to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that our faith may never be found wanting in thy sight;

### **Thursday 24 Christmas Eve**

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph: 'You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

### **Friday 25 Christmas Day**

Loving Jesus, you were born in a stable but worshipped by the angels.

Be with all who are lonely, and with all who feel distant from celebrations.

Be for us a living hope that lightens their hearts. Amen.

### **Saturday 26 St Stephen, Deacon and First Martyr**

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks, then the work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart. And to radiate the Light of Christ, every day, in every way, in all that we do and in all that we say.

Then the work of Christmas begins.

*–Howard Thurman*

### **Monday 28 Holy Innocents Day**

On this day when we recall the murder of innocent lives, let us stand before our just and holy God, and remember the violence and injustice of our world.

### **Tuesday 29 St Thomas Becket**

You who were a fearless Shepherd of the people of God, pray for us to have courage in all the circumstances of our lives,

### **Thursday 31 New Year's Eve**

Let us pray that 2021 may be marked as a year in which all people on earth work for peace and trust based on dialogue, mutual understanding and cooperation.

# KAREN McCARTHY 26 May 1945 to 17 October 2020

*When Karen was in hospital, she wrote the following to be read at her funeral in church on 5 November.*

I was Prince  
Charming at  
15 years old



I was born at the end of the war in 1945 in Blackpool. I lived in Layton with Mum, Dad and sister Sybil. I attended St Marks C of E church at the end of Brooklyn Avenue. I recall happy days going up to Sunday School, and the Rose Queen procession each year.

I went to Layton Primary school then Claremont Girls school. Later I was at Blackpool technical college and passed the ATD (Art Teachers' Diploma) before going on to Liverpool University to do my BA. I moved on from there to teach at Crown Street School for the Deaf in Liverpool for a year, then Preston Royal Cross School for the deaf for two years. I met George Booth – to whom I got engaged. I taught art at St Bede's comprehensive in Lytham St Annes. George and I went our separate ways and I then got a job at Park special school in Blackpool. I met Paul Hilland, whom I later married, and we had Jay my son. We had a two-bed bungalow in Squires Gate. Paul got a job in Kendal and we moved there for two-and-a-half years living in a freezing town cottage. Then we returned to Blackpool to live – Jay was just eight and my darling Mum, Cecilia was so pleased to have us near her again – unfortunately she passed away before lovely Becki, born two years later, could get to meet her. Grandad (my Dad) Norman called Becki and Jay his 'sweethearts'.

Paul got a job in West Sussex, so we went to live in Steyning – my happier place to live. Paul met someone else and we divorced. I managed on my own with my beloved children and got a full-time teaching job at a special school in Worthing for 17 years. I had a few good years married to Mac, but we were not really suited, and separated.

Two and a half years later (in June 2001) I met the love of my life Terry, the very kindest, most loving, understanding man who could always make me laugh. Terry, Jay, Becki, Jasmine, Ruby, Joshua, Samuel and I spent many happy occasions together and with Terry's sons Andrew, Graeme and family over the 19 years Terry and I were together.

I am so thankful for God's love throughout my life. Jesus had held my hand before and ever since I became a Christian, aged 15. Jesus sent me my loving son Jay, such a blessing for 48 years, and my angel daughter 38-year-old Becki who brought so much joy in our life together. My granddaughters, Jasmine and Ruby – thank you for being so caring and loving to me and Terry, and my amazing grandsons Joshua and Samuel. I thank Jesus for all the love they have shown me. All my lovely friends in Blackpool, Steyning and Shoreham, I thank God for all their help to me throughout the years and wonderful friendship.

I pray that all those I have known in my rich and blessed life, may know the love of Jesus in their lives.

*'For God so loved, the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him will have eternal life.'* (John 3:16.)

Be happy in the love of the Lord Jesus!

All my love, *Karen*

Anyone who would like to make a donation in loving memory of our friend, Karen McCarthy to Ovarian Cancer Action can do so either through Chalcraft Funerals at 55 High Street, or at <https://karen-mccarthy.muchloved.com>





## LIGHTING INSTALLATION



By the time you read this report the church project team and appointed contractor will have held a pre-start meeting, setting up the fundamentals and the signing of the contract to start the lighting and electrics installation. Finance is now in place, thanks to the congregation's tremendous support and a generous gift from the Friends of the Parish Church we reached our £70,000 target - phew! **Thank you!** The fund will remain open until the year end, to include

Brian Sawyer's Organ recitals in December, (see P 14) at which the donations for the recitals are going towards funding the back lighting for the three large Central Windows on the east wall, giving folk the opportunity to be part of a group contributing towards funding a major lighting area of the church.

### ***Important notice:***

*It is confirmed that the installation of the lighting will start on Monday 11th January until 28th March. Throughout this period the church will be closed Monday to Friday. Open each Saturday for cleaning and preparing for the Sunday Eucharist service.*

*Jim Lang. Project Co-ordinator.*

## APCM NOTES FOR STEYNING PARISH CHURCH

- Held in the Parish Church on Sunday 18 October and attended by the Vicar, Fr Mark and 47 parishioners.
- **Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2019:** Approved unanimously
- **Election of two new churchwardens:** The Vicar announced that both Bill Thomson and Sarah Lavery were elected to the office of churchwarden. The Vicar thanked the outgoing churchwardens, John Downe and Denise Bedford. Each was presented with flowers, gifts and a card in recognition of their service.
- **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2019:** Approved unanimously
- **Report on the electoral roll:** A current total of 176.
- **To elect four members of Deanery Synod:** Elizabeth Brown, John Edwards, Brian Hanson, Penny Warner. **To elect four members to the PCC:** Denise Bedford, John Downe, Penny Hill, Judie Thomson.
- **To receive the PCC's Report and Financial Statements to December 2019:** The report had been approved and signed by the PCC on 11 March 2019. Fixed assets amounted to £665,000 and cash in the bank was £275,219. Planned deficit was likely to be near £5,000.
- **The Fabric and group reports** had been distributed.
- **Questions or remarks:** Neil Aiton had observed that mission giving was just 2% and requested that the PCC consider this year the biblical principle of mission giving. The matter would be discussed at a future PCC meeting.

## CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

AS WE SEEK CHRIST.  
AS WE FIND HIM.  
AS WE FOLLOW HIM.  
WE SHALL HAVE  
THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. NOT FOR  
ONE FLEETING DAY EACH YEAR,  
BUT AS A COMPANION ALWAYS

*From: Big Cartel*

**AN IRISH CHRISTMAS BLESSING**  
THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS STAR  
TO YOU  
THE WARMTH OF HOME AND HEARTH  
TO YOU  
THE CHEER AND GOOD WILL OF FRIENDS  
TO YOU  
THE HOPE OF A CHILDLIKE HEART  
TO YOU  
THE LOVE OF THE SON, AND GOD'S PEACE  
TO YOU

## COMING TO A SCREEN NEAR YOU!

from the team that brought you  
*Generous God: the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard*

...just in time for Christmas.  
***"The Baby Born in Bethlehem"***

Keep an eye on the church website for details of our release date.

You may miss the Crib Service this year...  
but you won't want to miss this!



## TOMORROW

Do not worry about tomorrow,  
said the Lord. Love  
drives out fear, said the Lord.  
I think I understand. So today  
I reach into his good earth and I sow  
a little kindness here,  
a little gentleness there,  
and all and everywhere  
grace. And as the soil  
closes over them I know  
that tomorrow will contain  
their sweet, sacred fruit,  
and I worry no more.

– *Gideon Heugh*

None of us know what tomorrow will bring,  
but we do know that we are safe in God's  
hands. **We can hold onto the hope that  
every seed we sow in love and faith today  
will grow and be used by God – even  
beyond our lifetime.**



*"We are safe in  
God's hands."*

*By Maddy - mk*

### Christmas Toys and Gifts for our Families

We are appealing for your Christmas Toys and Gifts in a different way. We should be most grateful if you could give the money you would have spent on a toy to FSW. Each Family Practitioner can then buy something for each child. Your donations, as always, will be so welcome. If you would like to give a monetary gift, please could you put it in an envelope marked FSW and post through the Penfold Hall letterbox by 10<sup>th</sup> December. This can be either cash or a cheque made out to Steyning PCC with FSW written on the back.

Thank you so much for your great and kind generosity this year.

Sue and I wish you a most Happy Christmas and a Peaceful 2021.

With our love



## ANTIPHONS

In past years the church would be full for the Darkness to Light Service and the Nine Lessons and Carols. During these services the choir lead our worship through singing, and they would use Antiphons in some parts, especially during the Darkness to Light service.

The words of Advent Antiphons are there to enable us to experience the solemnity of the season - a time to think about the ultimate issues of death, judgement, hell and heaven. Advent is also a time to look forward with hope for the time that Christ would come as our Saviour. So this is a preparation for Christmas when Christ is seen as the Light of the world, the one who will banish the darkness. Antiphons are sung calling on God to deliver His people by quoting the Psalms, and as each one is sung the candles are lit gradually throughout the church starting with the West end and working towards the altar.

O morning Star

Splendour of light eternal

And sun of righteousness:

Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death.

*O Oriens 21 December*



## THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

The majority of December is made up of Advent...a time of waiting and preparing, and all leading up to the wonderful story of the birth of our Saviour. So I make no apology for printing the story for us all to read on the back page. Go on, read it again—perhaps slowly and focus on a special word that you can rest with for a while. How many times have you heard this story? I cannot say for myself, but what I do know is that each time there is something fresh and new for me to ponder on.

Good stories are worth reading more than once, and we know children love to have a familiar story read to them time and again, so why should we not be the same? Jesus said, "Become like little children".

We all have our life stories that are so important and worth sharing with others because we are all shaped by the day by day stories of our lives—often by things we have no power over, or by triumphs along the way; or by sadnesses and trials we have to face. Our own story sometimes feels it is everything we need, and yet Christmas Day has the challenge for us: JESUS. Our relationship with Jesus defines us in all that we do, say and are. Our goals can be very simple in life, or quite high, but pressing on towards these goals should be completely surrounded by gaining a clearer vision of Jesus and glimpses of glory.

I remember taking my children and grandchildren to many crib services - what a blessing to have those memories that contribute to my story - and at one I especially remember one young one asking me "Which is more important, Christmas Day or Easter Day?" Well I had to have a little think and not give my knee jerk reaction, then replied " Both have to be important, because you cannot have one without the other." I think he was okay with that, but from then on I decided that there would always be signs of Christmas around my home to go with the signs I already had that reminded me daily about Jesus' death and resurrection. Each year I leave a small Christmas decoration up somewhere in the house.

During the first Lockdown this year many of us lit a candle of hope in our windows. This was a light shining during a dark time and giving hope. This Christmas please light another special candle and be reminded of John 1 verse 5, that Jesus is "The Light shining in the darkness, and the darkness can NEVER extinguish it". One of the most loved Christmas carols is "O Little Town of Bethlehem", but I found another unknown verse:

*When children pure and happy pray to the blessed child  
When misery cries out to Thee, Son of the Mother mild  
When charity stands watching, and faith holds wide the door  
The darkness wakes, the glory breaks and Christmas comes once more.*

The Light will surely banish the darkness and give hope as we gaze in wonder at the child in the manger.



Chris Fitton

## O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

*O little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see thee lie  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight*

*For Christ is born of Mary  
And gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love  
O morning stars together  
Proclaim the holy birth  
And praises sing to God the King  
And Peace to men on earth*

*How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming,  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still,  
The dear Christ enters in.*

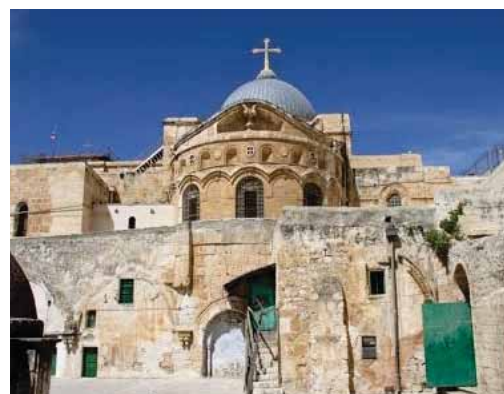
*O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray  
Cast out our sin and enter in  
Be born to us today  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell  
O come to us, abide with us  
Our Lord Emmanuel*

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) was a minister and a Sunday School teacher who was very tall and large and made quite an impression on people wherever he went, and was beloved by all who knew him well.

In 1865 he travelled to the Holy Land and on Christmas Eve he rode on horseback from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. (The name Bethlehem means the House of Bread). He was to assist at midnight mass at the Church of the Nativity, just a short distance from where the shepherds first saw the star that led them to the baby in the manger.

At Christmas time, three years later in 1868, Philip Brooks remembered that wonderful experience, and wrote the words to this beautiful carol for the children's choir of his church. The organist of the church put the music to the lyrics and on Christmas Eve, 1868, "*O Little Town of Bethlehem*" was sung for the first time.

Was Bethlehem a little town at the time Jesus was born? Yes, it was a small place, maybe a village in size, but today it is a city with over 60,000 people.



THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY

## GOD IS LOVE

*Some are tempted to ask, "How can a loving God allow so much pain?"*

*For the answer, we only need to look at His creation. We will see that God is a spirit of beauty, order, a provider of all our needs but above all, GOD IS LOVE, and by its essence, Love does not punish or turn away at times of need.*

*We have proof of His presence and spirit by the outpouring of love, care and selflessness we have witnessed since the start of the pandemic. Love makes us feel good because the time we spend loving and caring for others is time we don't delve into our own problems. If we all care for the needs of each other and unite in prayers, this power alone can change the world.*

*What God needs from us are our prayers (our willingness) to turn a world of greed and material want to a world where love, care and share prevail."*

*Sent in by Denise Bedford*



## TWO ORGAN CONCERTS IN AID OF 'LET THERE BE LIGHT'

I am sure that everyone is very aware of the devastating effect that the Covid 19 Pandemic has had on the performing arts both at amateur and professional levels. It has particularly affected many church choirs, including our own choir, who sadly have not sung together since the Choral Evensong last March. So, in the present circumstances I am delighted that Father Mark is allowing me to go ahead with two organ concerts in aid of our lighting project 'Let There Be Light'. Government restrictions permitting the concerts will be on **Saturday 5 December at 3.00pm** and on **Sunday 6 December at 10.30am after the morning service.**

Because of Covid safety precautions, numbers will have to be restricted for each concert and **entry will be by ticket** obtainable through the news page of the Church website or via Eventbrite by following this link for **5 December**: <https://tinyurl.com/y27233u9>  
Or this link for **6 December**: <https://tinyurl.com/y6oqcb54>

Entry is free and donations collected will contribute towards the back lighting of the three magnificent centre East windows which have not been funded at the moment.

I prepared this concert last June for the Steyning Festival and was disappointed when it had to be cancelled because of the Pandemic. Consequently, the programme is very festive and features the music of a number of English composers.

There will be several pieces of well-known music including 'Pomp and Circumstance' March No. 4 and 'Nimrod' from 'The Enigma Variations' by Elgar, William Walton's splendid Coronation March 'Crown Imperial' and the concert will finish with Mons Leidvin Takle's great piece 'The Power of Life'. A new dimension to the concert will be two large screens placed in the Chancel enabling the audience to see the organ console.



**Please support these concerts** which I hope will not only cheer you up in these dark times but will raise most of the £1,200 needed for the lighting of the East windows.

*Brian Sawyer*

## SAINT OF THE MONTH



**BIRINUS (c600-650)**

### **APOSTLE OF WESSEX AND FIRST BISHOP OF DORCHESTER**

It is thought that Birinus was born in Lombardy about 600 AD. Following Saint Augustine who had been sent to England by Pope Gregory in 596 and converted the East Saxons, Birinus was commissioned by Pope Honorius to continue the evangelisation of the English. He was consecrated bishop in Genoa by the Archbishop of Milan.

Birinus arrived in the area which is now Southampton in c630. His original plan was to penetrate into the interior where no evangelist had been. However, he found that the West Saxons were still pagan and felt that God was calling him to remain amongst them. He persuaded the West Saxon King, Cynegils, to allow him to preach the Gospel in his kingdom.

At this time Cynegils was negotiating an alliance with King Oswald of Northumbria in order to fight the Mercians, but Oswald, being a Christian, was not prepared to forge an alliance with a pagan. This led to Cynegils asking Birinus to teach him the Faith and, as a result, he and his whole household were baptised. The King declared that the Romano-British town of Dorchester (in what is now Oxfordshire) should become a bishopric and Birinus was named as the first bishop. The cathedral at Dorchester was founded in 634.

The mission progressed and many West Saxons were converted to the Faith and baptised. Among those would have been the family of Cuthman who, as the next generation, brought the Faith eastwards to Steyning. The spread of Christianity meant that Birinus had to supervise the building of many churches throughout the region. Towards the end of his ministry he built a church in Winchester because the town was growing in importance. It began to eclipse Dorchester and, as a result, there is no record of Wessex bishops at Dorchester after 660.

Birinus died at Dorchester on 3rd December 649 or 650 and he was buried in his cathedral. By 690 Winchester had become the seat of the Wessex kings and, inevitably, it also became the ecclesiastical centre with the See being transferred from Dorchester to Winchester. Because of the great work which Birinus had done in bringing Christianity to the Wessex people his relics were transferred to Winchester Cathedral from Dorchester in 690.

Bede described Birinus as "a good and just man, who in carrying out his duties was guided rather by an inborn love of virtue than by what he had read in books". His feast day is 3rd December (the day of his death) or 4th September (the day his relics were transferred).

# FEEDING THE WORLD – YOUR SHARE IN THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

## The World Food Programme wins Nobel Peace Prize!

The news came just too late for me to fit it in to last month's article.

The Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded nearly every year since 1901 to individuals or organisations which have made an outstanding contribution to peace. The founder made his money from making explosives.

The World Food Programme (WFP) joins such illustrious previous winners as Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The Prize citation said this was because of the WFP's "efforts to combat hunger", its work in conflict areas, and its work to stop hunger being used as a weapon of war. In 2019, it helped nearly one hundred million people in 88 countries. It can provide a meal for about 50p a time. In its 60 year history, the WFP has responded to most of the major emergencies like floods, famine, the Asian Tsunami and people displaced and made homeless by war. Much of its work, inevitably, has been in Africa and the Middle East.



As I wrote last month, Christian Aid and the World Food Programme are working together on a major project in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), two of the countries with the highest number of extremely poor people in the world.

Both should be rich countries. Nigeria has huge oil reserves and the DRC vast mineral wealth. But both are plagued by conflict and poverty.

**Why should we give to this project?** In the book of Isaiah we read: "Is not this the fast that I choose, to loose the bonds of injustice... to share your bread with the hungry." (Isaiah 58:6-7) As Christians, we should be particularly generous towards and supportive of the poorest and those close to death.

This project is a particularly effective way of helping. It is an effective partnership between the World Food Programme (a major United Nations body with global reach) and Christian Aid, with its effective grassroots network of churches and community organisations. Through these networks, aid gets directly to the displaced people. And it's not just a project which provides food – vital though that is – but one which seeks to establish long-term, sustainable solutions for food security. The World Food Programme will add £67 for every pound given by Christian Aid supporters. Your £10 could become £680 – this is effective giving!

**How do we give?** You may already have given directly or to the Red Bucket appeal in Church – if so, thank you.

- Online donations can be made at <http://caid.org.uk/wfp>.
- Or you can send a cheque or charity cheque to Christian Aid (FAO Jack Merrington), 35 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, London SE1 7RL. Jack Merrington has told me that gifts received after the original deadline of end of November can still be processed, so there is still a little time to contribute.

**You too can share in the work of this year's Nobel Peace Prize.  
You can help some of the most vulnerable people in the world!**

*Roger Williamson*



## WEALD AND DOWNLAND

Anyone who has lived in Steyning for a long time, and especially if they have had any connection with Steyning Grammar School, will remember with affection Paul Coltman and his wife Jean. When I started teaching at the Grammar School in 1972 Paul was Head of the English Department. I remember him as a very quiet, gentle man, who apparently maintained a constant 'open house' for all his pupils, past and present. Paul's main interest was bee-keeping, but his real passion and great gift was writing poetry, for which he received national recognition. A number of his pupils at SGS, including Ted Walker, also became distinguished poets. In 1974 Paul published a collection of his poems inspired by Sussex which he called 'Weald and Downland'. After his retirement, Paul and Jean moved to Washington and lived in a cottage in Church Street. Jean, who was a musician, became the organist and choir-mistress of St. Mary's Church in Washington, serving there for many years. I had the privilege of playing for her funeral a few years ago.

I still have my copy of 'Weald and Downland'. if anyone would like to borrow it and read more of Paul's poetry. I've chosen two of them for you.

*Brian Sawyer*

### **Cutting a Churchyard. Wiston**

We stoop and work it sideways, each crooked stick  
lifting the grass and nettles. Sickles bite.  
The swaths are tossed behind to dry in heaps.  
And there are certain sounds: the church's  
jacks;  
the strike of hook and protest of the tresses;  
sometimes a sickle finds a child's grave;  
a man sometimes will stretch and hone his  
blade,  
leaning its point upon an old grave-head,  
whose letters have so far returned to stone  
no-one will try to trace them anymore.  
Our bodies dried and spent, minds slow with  
sun,

we do not give those people underneath much  
thought,  
although they would have known this work,  
these tools,  
the feeling at the languid fall of day,  
and would have used the same spare speech we  
use,  
dry and laconic, words men say to men,  
when working in long shadows towards night.

### **Kestrel**

At last I stopped, let my hands  
drop idle and looked up.  
A kestrel was pinned on the sky,  
hovering, all this while, poised  
in the burly wind, balancing  
weight on the air with the tilt  
of a feather. Then it rolled  
away, turning, turning patterns,  
careless that nothing remained,  
no sky blue print of its art.

Down here I labour, hack  
order from earth and wood and words,  
eyes narrowed to any task  
that promises permanence,  
the mastery of pinning  
a butterfly's wings on paper.  
So, busy, I seldom lift  
eyes, where the kestrel, floating,  
makes in a ripple of air,  
the easy art of being.

*From "Weald and Downland" by Paul Coltman*



## THE AUTUMN TERM 2020 AT STEYNING C OF E PRIMARY

At Steyning C of E Primary School this term everyone; pupils, parents, staff and governors have worked together to make school a great place to be for the children. We have risk assessed everything, changed timetables repeatedly, read changing rules daily, implemented and reviewed start and finish procedures weekly, washed our hands thousands of times and, fingers crossed as I write, not had to send a whole year group home. We are also truly thankful because we have had amazing smiling faces, huge gratitude shown and we continually discover better ways to achieve things through happy accidents. As the old saying goes 'necessity is the mother of invention'.

One example of this was at our first Parents Evenings via phone and the feedback was very positive as both parents and teachers found them to be effective, efficient, punctual and allowed parents to engage around their lifestyle and work commitments.

This year we have more reason to feel even more proud as we have received great news that two of our staff have been awarded prestigious awards in the Sussex Teacher of the Year Awards. Mr Simon Knowles won the Sports Teacher of the Year Award for Crawley, Mid Sussex and

All at Steyning Parish Church send our congratulations to both Simon and Debbie.

Horsham and Mrs Debbie Taylor won both the Business Manager of the Year Award for Crawley, Mid Sussex and Horsham, as well as the Overall Sussex Business Manager of the Year Award. They are truly deserved and once again show how blessed we are here at Steyning C of E Primary School.

Also, in the last week of the first half term, all our children went out running. Our children in Year 1 – Year 4 ran 800 metres and those in Years 5 & 6 each ran a mile. To celebrate their achievements one of our parents donated Brighton Mini Marathon Mile 2020 Medals to the children who ran a mile and each child received one to take home.

We also collected a significant amount of food and other groceries to go to the Shoreham Food Bank and this was donated to them just before half term also. They were very grateful for all the donations, particularly at that time. Our teachers have been amazing and have worked hard on our new provision for remote learning. This is an exciting new venture which, should we ever need to send a year group or class into self-isolation, will become invaluable for every child and family.

We have also introduced our new range of awards linked to our values. This involved the children being awarded Hands being sent home via an App called Marvellous Me, to their parents phone when their child was identified as doing things considered loving, caring and kind. Then at the end of the first half term two children from each class were awarded with a specially designed badge called the Hand of Love.



(cont. on next page)

## Love

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud."*

(1 Corinthians 13:4)

Our school values are:

***Love, Happy, Respect, Collaborative, Curious, Brave.***

This half term our focus is on 'Happy' and at the end of term two children from each class will be awarded the Hand of Happiness for being Happy and helping others to be happy through their small acts of kindness, gratitude and positive attitude. This is all underpinned by the bible teaching:

*"This is the day that the lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118: 24)*

This half term we are very pleased to be back in school with the children when many will be in lockdown. We know this will be a difficult one for families and we are poised to help them cope with the difficulties ahead. As a school we do so much more than teach. We support our families through bereavement, social and emotional traumas, mental health difficulties, as well as those with financial difficulties too. So, as a parish, I ask that you hold our families in your prayers and our staff too as we enter this time of the lead up to Christmas.

Our school and Parish link continues to grow in new and unexpected ways due to Covid. An example of this is that Collective worship is being supported by Steyning Parish Church through its Open The Book team who are sending in videos of plays based on Gospel teachings which can be shared with the children. This resource can now be saved and reused over and over. Although we cannot visit the church this term we will still have a tangible link. Christmas in school will look different, but we will try nativities in school without a live audience, filmed and shared. Staff will be doing their best to ensure that Christmas is the best it can be for all yet still Covid secure. Currently we also have a virtual school tour for anyone thinking about our school for their child next year, if so follow this link to take a look, or even if you just fancy a peek inside: <https://youtu.be/qGEDRC0ydSs>

If you choose to send your child to us, you can be sure of one thing we promise to:

*"Do everything in love; we do our best in all we do and all we say with god's love,"*

*Sue Harrison  
Headteacher*

We must make "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34) the foundation of national respect, the standard of our national discernment, the bedrock of both our personal relationships and a civilized society. . . .

*Sister Joan Chittister*

**Editor:** Thank you for the various writings and articles that have been sent in. I do enjoy reading each one and including them for all to read. - **keep sending them in.**

## TANKER TALES

As I write this the Prime Minister has announced his latest trick in the fight against the virus, broadcast on Halloween, with the treat being that if we all stick to the rules we might be allowed to have a normal Christmas.

Like everybody I have struggled with much since the start of this pandemic, first I battled with overwhelming fear and a sense of imminent doom; this fear was replaced by a raging anger at the injustice of lockdown restrictions, yet both are equally destructive negative emotions; until now where I find myself in a safe haven of patiently enduring whatever lays before us over the coming months.

I have read and heard of people during these times reflecting on early life experiences, their school days; first love; or previous employment. I can certainly identify with each of those. But more recently I have been reflecting on holiness. Holiness is an uncomfortable word for it instantly makes us aware of our personal weaknesses and failings. I am sure none of us would proclaim to be holy yet perhaps we can identify what holiness is and people on our journey that have lived those values. My first experience of a holy person was the young nun attached to my secondary school, sadly her name escapes me now but I can still picture her, of Asian descent with a broad welcoming smile. Another was a Franciscan Friar, Brother Angelo, who had a link with my previous parish. You may have heard me mention before a good friend, Martin Jeffree, who taught me much and did so much good through his charity Faith in Action. All three persons just had that air of holiness that whilst hard to put a finger on, one just felt the love of Jesus working through them. They each led dedicated lives of service to others and had a child-like joy of life and a sense of humour that was infectious. They were each prepared to give a personal testimony of Jesus Christ.

Holiness is to have a sense of personal responsibility and integrity. There will be a day of reckoning when we will be held accountable to God for our actions in life. It was Martin that shared a story with me of an employer that asked him to lie on an occasion, Martin's response to his employer was "if I can lie **for** you, I can lie **to** you". If you know something to be wrong, that goes against your conscience, then why do it?

Radio 2 has a long running slot on the Jeremy Vine show with the theme of What Makes us Human? There has been a broad spectrum of contributors, some well known, others less so but each taking a different angle on the theme. We find ourselves on the precipice of an industrial revolution, this time with an emphasis on the role of technology and artificial intelligence. What will be the balance between machine and humanity? Focus on the word – artificial. It is not real. We are created beings made by our loving Father, the author of all creation and founded on love. Machines are not capable of love or of any other human emotion such as empathy or compassion. What makes us human is our inner awareness of God and the capability to know God through the human life of Jesus Christ and to give worship and praise with all our being and soul. How often have we heard the phrase from government of "we are following the science", my question is where does God fit into science? There is a balance to be established between ever increasing knowledge and ethics; in the addiction of new scientific discoveries there lays a trapdoor where we sell our souls and mankind becomes godlike.

Holiness is to have a sense of personal responsibility and integrity.

(cont. over)

The pandemic has led me to re-evaluate what is important in life for me, what my priorities are or should be. I have made the decision to postpone indefinitely my discernment process to the priesthood. My family need me and my workplace needs me. Our girls are at a formative stage of their lives and need their dad around to provide much needed stability as they grow into young ladies. I need to be present to protect my family for what the future holds.

This may come as a surprise to those of you who have guided, supported, encouraged and prayed for me over the years. I thank you deeply. But fear not, my faith is not undiminished rather it has grown deeper roots. This time has allowed me to turn to scripture with renewed joy; no longer out of a sense of duty but out of personal choice to listen to God revealing himself to me through His holy words. It has been a period of silence, reflection, contemplation and a time to listen and observe all that is taking place around us.

It has been a time when we have felt like passengers on an out of control train ride, unable to make any difference to the direction it takes. But I urge you individually to turn to God with renewed hope for the future. Make time for God to speak to you and reveal his Truth. In a world of lies and corruption it is impossible to make sense of all that is illogical and false. Let God teach you and sustain you. Brothers and sisters make time to listen to God with the expectation that God will speak to you. By definition, the Holy Spirit is supernatural, and we can therefore expect supernatural intervention in our lives, each sending out a ripple of love, which will join with other ripples to create a wave of love that no darkness can overcome.

In the face of many crises, from viral pandemics to climate change, be assured that God will not let His creation be destroyed. But there will come a day of reckoning, which side will you be on?

*Steve McGrath*

## IF YOU LOOK FOR ME AT CHRISTMAS

If you look for me at Christmas

You won't need a special star;

I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,

I'm right there, where you are.

You may not be aware of Me

Amid the celebrations,

You'll have to look beyond the stores

And all the decorations

But if you take a moment

From your list of things to do,

And listen to your heart, you'll find

I'm waiting there for you.

You're the one I want to be with,

You're the reason that I came,

And you'll find me in the stillness

As I'm whispering your name.

*Unknown*



## NURSERY RHYME

*Frère Jacques.* 'Freh-rah-jak-ah.'

Brother James, Brother James,  
Who is teaching you  
This foreign song,  
This kindergarten rhyme  
From across the water?

*Dormez vous?* 'Dor-may-voo?'

Are you sleeping? Are you sleeping?  
So young you were  
When you heard this first,  
How old you have become.  
Is it a memory, I wonder,  
Or a dream?

*Sonnez les matins!* 'Sonnay-leh-matt-eeen-ahs!'

Sound the bells for matins! Sound the bells for  
matins!

The bells for morning prayers.

Waken,

And rouse everyone.

Let all souls rise to this glorious day

This most blessed morning

Of prayer

*Ding Dang Dong!*

Ding Dang Dong!

Awaken to the new day,

Promising you a sacred role.

Unique, in a world of suffering,

Find your place in eternity.

Awaken to your life!

*Larry Culliford*

## HOME

This year, many of us have been spending much more time at home. But when you think of home what is the picture you have in your mind? Do you think of the house you live in now, the place where you grew up, or where you are when you are with loved ones?

The word 'home' can have different meanings for each one of us, and brings up all sorts of memories and emotions. At this time of year keep in your prayers those who do not have a proper roof over their heads and those who will not be "Home" this Christmas.

I'd love for you to share what home means to you. In the midst of our present challenges, let's hold on to the truth that all of us have a home in the heart of our Lord Jesus. He will never leave us nor forsake us.

*Adapted from Tear Fund*

## CHURCHES TOGETHER IN STEYNING NEED YOUR HELP

Last year, thanks to your very generous donations, Churches Together were able to deliver Christmas Hampers to some of our local residents. These were very well received and brought some much needed Christmas cheer. We feel that this will be even more important this year but in view of the current situation we have decided to collect money rather than donations of food. Debbie Wood at The Hub will approach the Co-op and other Steyning traders who were so generous last year for goods to fill as many hampers as money provides.

**There are several methods of donating to this very worthwhile cause:**

1. Put cash in the red bucket in church when services resume.
2. Donate by contactless card in church after a Sunday service.
3. Put a cheque through the Penfold Hall letterbox, it should be payable to Steyning PCC and have '**Hampers**' on the back, please.
4. Donate by BACS to P C C Steyning, Sort code: 30-99-93 Account No. 03220862 Please use reference '**Hampers**'

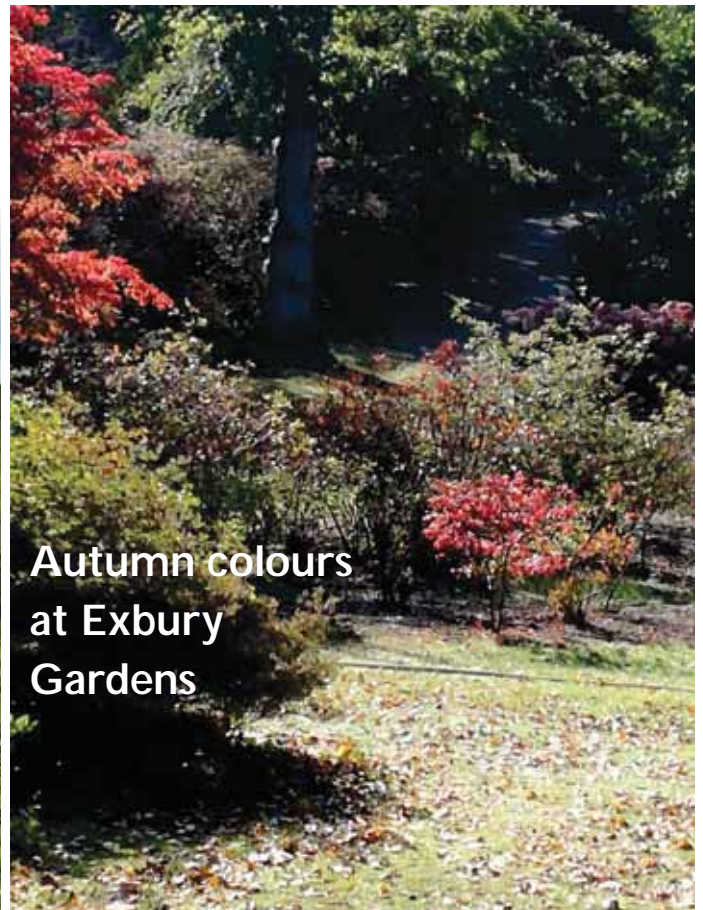
*Thank you for any donations you can make.*

*Christine Aubrey*

## YOUR PHOTOS.....



**Cows keeping warm while Steyning Downland Scheme work**



**Autumn colours at Exbury Gardens**

## RECIPE FOR DECEMBER

### BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING FOR ONE

#### Ingredients

- 2 slices of bread from a small loaf or 2-3 slices of cut bread, depends on your dish
- freshly grated nutmeg if you have
- ½ oz (10 g) butter
- 1 level teaspoon chopped candied peel if you have otherwise leave it out. I generally have to leave it out!
- ¾ oz (20 g) currants I've been using raisins to good effect
- 2½ fl oz (60 ml) milk I use whole milk
- 2 tablespoons double cream
- ¾ oz (20 g) caster sugar
- ¼ level teaspoon lemon zest I generally go without but it's nicer with
- 1 small egg. I only have large and it works fine

Gas 4 or 180 fan

You will also need a 4 inch (10 cm) diameter ramekin

#### Method

1. First butter the inside of the ramekin, I use a very small pie dish, smearing the butter on with kitchen paper.
2. Then slice the bread – not too thickly – and butter the slices, leaving the crusts on.
3. Now you will have to trim the slices of bread to fit into the ramekin, so do this with half of it to make one layer of buttered bread over the base of the dish.
4. Sprinkle the candied peel and half the currants over this layer.
5. then trim the rest of the bread to form another layer on top.
6. Sprinkle the rest of the currants on top.
7. Next, in a glass measuring jug, measure out the milk and stir in the cream, followed by the sugar and lemon rind.
8. Now whisk the egg, first on its own and then into the milk mixture.
9. Pour the whole lot over the bread, then sprinkle over some freshly grated nutmeg.
10. Bake in the oven for 35 minutes, until the top is golden-brown. It does rise up but it settles once you take it out of the oven.



ENJOY THIS  
FAVOURITE

#### A Thankful Prayer for Christmas Dinner

Lord of All, we give you thanks for your abundance, and for all the great things you have given us, especially the birth of Your Son on this day. We ask your blessing upon this food, and upon our friends and family. We also pray that in your great mercy, you would look kindly upon all those in need this day. We pray in Jesus name, Amen.

*David Bennet*



The Friends' constitution states that its primary objective is "to assist and support the Dean and Chapter in maintaining and improving facilities and services, and to develop and promote the Cathedral's mission."

The most tangible and visible way in which the Friends do this is through its project funding and recent activities in this regard have been considerable.

Specifically, the projects that the Friends have funded over the last year are many and varied and represent a monetary value well in excess of £200,000. Included in this are:

- Sponsorship of last year's highly successful Southern Cathedrals' Festival

- Refurbishment of the Vicars Hall Kitchen

- Nave seating frontals

- New cassocks for the Vergers

- Weekday chasubles

- New altar linen cloth

- Chorister scholarship

- The majority of the costs for the new Cathedral database project



The Friends take pride in the grants that have been made to the Dean and Chapter in the last year, none of which would have been possible without the support of the members of the Friends.

*For further information about what the Friends do and how to join, please visit the Cathedral website ([www.chichestercathedral.org.uk](http://www.chichestercathedral.org.uk)) and select 'Getting involved'.*

*The Friends are a registered charity. Membership costs £15 per year and £25 for a couple.*

## CHRISTMAS IN THE HOLY LAND

Christmas in the Holy Land is a shout of joy and a cry of pain. Christians of all denominations take the opportunity to come out of the shadows and show the wider community that though they are small in number they are present and they have something to share.

From early in December until late in January, Christian lights bedeck churches, Christian schools and homes. In Israel and Palestine these are not simply brightening the dark nights as they might do in more secular parts of the world, they do really show that the light of Christ has come and is coming into the world.

Christians here are aware that the world turns its eyes towards Bethlehem on December 24. The Basilica of the Nativity and its celebrations become an opportunity to show that Christians who have maintained this site as a place of pilgrimage for many centuries also honour it as a living place of worship.

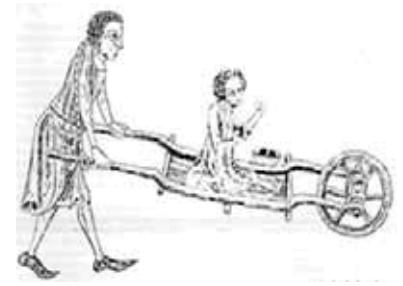
At Christmas, the joy of the world is declared but a cry of pain of the current suffering of Palestinians' thwarted hopes can also be perceived. Christians everywhere should not celebrate the former without remembering the latter.

*The Very Revd Canon Richard Sewell, Dean of St George's College, Jerusalem.*

# THE STEYNING SOCIETY

We would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

**Talks** are available to all (during Covid-19 restrictions) and can be viewed via YouTube. A link is available from our website [www.steyningsociety.org.uk/talks](http://www.steyningsociety.org.uk/talks)



Currently available until 14th December is

## "Mad cap ideas - Quality Inventions"

by Douglas J Eaton

As advertised in the November magazine.

The New Year begins with two special Talks:

## "Brighton before the Pavilion - a different aspect of the city's history"

by Geoff Mead (a well known University of Sussex lecturer)

from Monday 11th January until Sunday 14th February

## "Why gardening matters"

by Juliet Sargeant Award winning garden designer and experienced plants woman  
from Monday 15th February until Sunday 14th March

**Juliet** says "This will be a reflection on 30 years of work as a garden designer, outlining some projects that have been important to me in transforming people's lives and the way they relate to their gardens and the wider landscape. I will speak about the changes that I have witnessed in people's understanding of the importance of landscape to our health and well-being; the burgeoning body of scientific evidence and the slow, but important change in the attitudes of policy-makers.

And, I will celebrate the work of other garden-makers, scientists and health professionals in this field.

I will outline the importance of the home gardener as steward of a large total area of land and illustrate how a greater connectedness to Nature is changing the way that we garden. How we are eschewing some traditional methods and learning to garden more in harmony with Nature and with a greater responsibility to the Planet and its future inhabitants".

This is a special talk to remind all gardeners about their responsibility towards the Planet, to combat **Climate Change** and to join **Greening Steyning**

And finally a message to all our members: we are proposing a post Covid-19 Celebration Party in lieu of our cancelled Christmas Party, hopefully in July.

## COMFORT AND JOY

**This is a booklet of short daily readings from Christmas Day until January 2, and published by Church House Publishing.** ([chpublishing.co.uk](http://chpublishing.co.uk)) It has been produced specifically to comfort those for whom Christmas may not be one of jubilation.

# CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

P S I V H C H R I S T M A S T R E E P  
 E U A G W C O M L M I S T L E T O E H  
 M S C N N W E R I N S D R E H P E H S  
 P E O A T I E E I E B Y X G S T A R F  
 I J C H R A D K P X F Z E N E H V A W  
 A F J H U O C D A S Z T O A H T M V H  
 F O O D I F L L U C S S Y A D I L O H  
 E H A W G M T S A P S N W N L E L N H  
 G T I T P O N Q I U S A E Y E L V E S  
 O R V I A H S E T N S A M E Y K N M E  
 O I H N P A R T Y L G R M T U R I E L  
 R B N S G O L E L U Y I E T S Q B S B  
 C R E E D N I E R V N E N K S I O I U  
 S Q M L B U B X I X I B K G C I R W A  
 K X U P B O X I N G D A Y R N A R H B  
 M I N C E P I E S H P L O D U R R H C  
 U R E P A P G N I P P A R W F T Q C C  
 P R E S E N T S W T N E V D A G Y D R  
 S N O W M A N M U L L E D W I N E N J

ADVENT

ANGELS

BAUBLES

BELLS

BIRTH OF JESUS

BOXING DAY

CAROL SINGING

CHIMNEY

CHRISTMAS CAKE

CHRISTMAS

PUDDING

CHRISTMAS TREE

CRACKERS

ELVES

FAMILY

FOOD

HOLIDAYS

HOLLY

IVY

MINCE PIE

MISTLETOE

MULLED WINE

PARTY

PRESENTS

QUEEN'S SPEECH

REINDEER

ROBIN

RUDOLPH

SANTA CLAUS

SCROOGE

SHEPHERDS

SNOWMAN

STAR

TINSEL

TURKEY

WISE MEN

WRAPPING PAPER

YULE LOG



## ANAGRAM FOR DECEMBER



How many words can you make from:

**CHRISTMAS**

**REMEMBER:**

All words to have three or more letters, but only use each letter once

No capitalised words

No plurals

.....So, SIT down SMARTISH and MASH the letters up.....

There is my 8 letter word. *Good luck.*

## GUESS THE CHRISTMAS CAROL OPPOSITES

1. The lad is a diminutive percussionist
2. I know that adult
3. Sir Lancelot with laryngitis.
4. The smogless bewitching hour arrived
5. Go away all you unbelievers
6. Sadness in minutia
7. Pay no attention to the Devil's shout
8. Lucifer awake the moody ladies
9. Hither, removed from bed
10. Take down the lifeless roots from the entrance



- |     |                               |
|-----|-------------------------------|
| 4.  | It came upon a midnight clear |
| 3.  | Silent night                  |
| 2.  | What child is this?           |
| 1.  | The little drummer boy        |
| 5.  | Come ye faithful people       |
| 6.  | Joy to the world              |
| 7.  | Hark the Herald Angels sing   |
| 8.  | Away in a manger              |
| 9.  | Away in a manger              |
| 10. | Deck the halls                |

ANSWERS

## *The ties that bind*

“Who are these people?” You’ve hardly seen them all year yet here you are, paper hat askew, squashed between them on the sofa at Christmas. On a branch out in the cold darkness of the garden, also sandwiched between aunts, brothers, cousins and daughters, a tiny bird is asking a similar question.



Long-tailed tits and humans are two of Britain’s most social species. And just like a visit from your relatives, the arrival of a long-tailed tit flock in your garden can turn tranquillity into chaos. It’s like someone has emptied a box of feathered fire-works over the fence. They manically bicker on the bird feeder and swing acrobatically upside-down on the fat balls, all the while trilling, rattling and screaming ‘eee-heee-heee’ like a troupe of Michael Jackson impersonators. What you’re witnessing is a group of roving relatives, roaming the neighbourhood to pillage your peanuts. This posse of outlaws consists of in-laws, brothers, sons and daughters. With their gorgeous pink, black and white plumage and those ridiculously long tails, these flying lollypops must qualify for Britain’s cutest bird. Then, suddenly they’re gone and the pulse rate of the garden returns to normal.

By late winter the extended family will drift apart to find new partners, ready to start new families. In March, the foundations are laid for an epic construction. Moss building bricks are lashed together with ropes of sticky spider’s webs. The walls rise, a camouflage cladding of lichen is added to the roof and a cosy filling of a thousand feathers lines the interior. The end result looks a crocheted stomach and soon there will be plenty of rumbling from inside as eight hungry chicks demand to be fed. But raising a large family can take its toll. The constant hunt for insects can exhaust a parent almost to breaking point. And that’s when something unusual and wonderful happens. Their family arrives to save them. Aunties and uncles who have not been successful raising their own family that year will selflessly help the parents and feed their nephews and nieces.

Once the children have flown the nest the whole gang remains together and joins with other siblings to form your chaotic neighbourhood feeding flock. But the biggest challenge of the year still awaits: winter. Freezing night-time temperatures exact a heavy toll on our garden birds. And that’s why at Christmas, hidden deep in a hedge, you’ll find the extended family of long-tailed tits huddled together on a frosty branch, sharing their warmth and surviving. Like them, we can all extend a warm wing to surround and support our family and friends this Christmas, whether near or far. Because none of us can get through this on our own.



*Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust*



### The Birth of Jesus Christ

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### The Shepherds and the Angels

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,  
"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

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